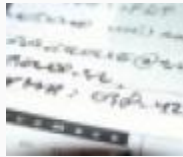


**on 17 April 2014**



KOTA SAMARAHAN: Government recognised there are areas of critical skill shortages in medical and nursing in Sarawak, which can overcome by working closely with the private sectors. Assistant Public Health Minister Datuk Dr Jerip Susil said the shortage of doctors and nurses is already being felt in the recent years and efforts must be made to address the problem.

"The shortage of the medical personnel cannot be filled overnight. But, we are looking at alternatives that could help us up, such as encouraging the local institutions of higher learning to work closely with the private sectors," said Jerip after witness the signing ceremony of

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and Timberland Medical Centre at UNIMAS here today.

Jerip said working with the private sector able to enhance the capacity building amongst the medical personnel and therefore the collaboration is indeed opportune and timely.

He said the collaboration also comes at an important juncture for Sarawak to continue the journey to transform the medical sector, narrow down the gap between the private and public medical industry by end of this decade.

"Critical to our success will be the availability of qualified medical personnel to meet the growing and diverse needs of our community, in tandem with the effort to steer the medical sector into health tourism, a growing niche in the service industry," he said.

"Besides, we need more doctors and nurses in the public hospital and to provide excellent services equal to the private hospital," he said.

The MoU allow both parties to achieve the common goal of providing excellent training experiences and increase the number of clinical specialists.

UNIMAS medical students and clinicians have the opportunities to do private practice at the Timberland Medical Centre

Source: **New Straits Times**